

多文化間交渉における『あいだ』の研究

Studies in “In-betweeness” in Cross-cultural Communication

期 間 2019 年 4 月～2020 年 3 月

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Period April 2019–March 2020

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「責任」は responsibility、Verantwortlichkeit などの欧米語の訳語として定着している。「責任を負う」という日本語表現は、外からの要請に対して受け身で「負う」という文脈を想定させ、「責任がある」というと、なにか道義的に責めを負うという印象を伴う。ところが Take responsibility という英語は、あくまでも主体が積極的に責任を取る assume するという態度を前提とする。一例にすぎないが、同様に、欧米語では主体の能動的な働きかけとして理解される行為が、日本語では受動の対応へと置換される場合が多く見受けられる。行政作文で主語を省略して受動態を多く用いる日本語表現法が、責任の放棄と短絡されて外交的な誤解を招く場合から、「おもて」と「うら」の関係が positive vs. negative の対へと欧語に訳されて変質を遂げる場合まで、類例は枚挙に暇がない。本研究ではこれらの具体的事例を出発点に、比較言語学・比較文化論としてではなく、ひろく文化事象の翻訳に伴う情報変質、文化伝達媒体の母胎や型板の設定、主導権闘争の様相を検討したい。

The Japanese word “sekinin” is translation of Western words such as “responsibility” and “Verantwortlichkeit.” The Japanese expression “sekinin o ou” (“take responsibility”) is posited in a context of passive assumption vis-à-vis an outside demand, and “sekinin ga aru” carries the impression of having assumed a moral responsibility. However, in English, the phrase “take responsibility” is premised on the notion of an actor actively assuming responsibility. This is just one example of cases where, while in Western languages an act that is understood as representing active effort on the part of the actor, in Japanese in many cases it is replaced in the Japanese expression by a passive response. There are countless examples, such as the way the use of passive expressions omitting the identity of the subject, which is common in Japanese government documents, is misinterpreted as shirking of responsibility to the point of causing diplomatic misunderstanding or the relationship of “omote” and “ura” is transformed in the translation into Western languages into “positive” and “negative.” Taking these kinds of specific examples as our point of departure, this project will examine the ramifications not only in terms of comparative linguistics and comparative culture, but the distortion of information through translation of cultural phenomena, the establishment of templates of cross-cultural communication, and aspects of the struggle for leadership.

